

What is claimed is:

1. A lithographic printing plate material comprising a flexible support having thereon a hydrophilic layer and an image forming layer, wherein the flexible support having the hydrophilic layer exhibits a transmission density of 0.5 to 1.2, and the outermost surface of an unexposed area of the image forming layer exhibiting a glossiness of 0.1 to 10.

2. The material of claim 1, wherein the image forming layer contains a heat-melting material exhibiting a melting point of 40 to 300 °C.

3. The material of claim 2, wherein the heat-melting material is at least one selected from the group consisting of a paraffin, a polyolefin, a polyethylene wax, a microcrystalline wax and a fatty acid wax.

4. The material of claim 2, wherein the heat-melting material is comprised of particles having an average particle size of 0.4 to 3.0 μm .

5. The material of claim 1, wherein the image forming layer contains thermoplastic polymer particles.

6. The material of claim 1, wherein the support is colored.

7. The material of claim 1, wherein the material exhibits a difference in $L^*a^*b^*$ value obtained in white backing between exposed and unexposed areas (ΔE) of 6 to 20.

8. The material of claim 1, wherein the image forming layer contains an oligosaccharide.

9. The material of claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic layer contains metal oxide particles.

10. The material of claim 1, wherein the support further has an underlayer below the hydrophilic layer and at least one of the image forming layer, the hydrophilic layer and the underlayer contains a light-to-heat conversion material.

11. A printing method comprising:

(a) exposing a printing plate material to a laser or an infrared ray based on image information and

(b) performing printing with supplying an aqueous dampening liquid and an ink to the exposed printing plate material,

wherein the printing plate material comprises a flexible support having thereon a hydrophilic layer and an image forming layer, and the flexible support having the hydrophilic layer exhibiting a transmission density of 0.5 to 1.2 and the outermost surface of an unexposed area of the image forming layer exhibiting a glossiness of 0.1 to 10.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the image forming layer contains a heat-melting material exhibiting a melting point of 40 to 300 °C.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the heat-melting material is at least one selected from the group consisting of a paraffin, a polyolefin, a polyethylene wax, a microcrystalline wax and a fatty acid wax.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the heat-melting material is comprised of particles having an average particle size of 0.4 to 3.0 μm .

15. The method of claim 11, wherein the image forming layer contains thermoplastic polymer particles.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein the support is colored.

17. The method of claim 11, wherein the material exhibits a difference in La^*b^* value obtained in white backing between exposed and unexposed areas (ΔE) of 6 to 20.

18. The method of claim 11, wherein the image forming layer contains an oligosaccharide.

19. The method of claim 11, wherein the hydrophilic layer contains metal oxide particles.

20. The method of claim 11, wherein the support further has an underlayer below the hydrophilic layer and at least

one of the image forming layer, the hydrophilic layer and the underlayer contains a light-to-heat conversion material.